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DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY
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IN REPLY REFER TO
OPNAVINST 6410.1
N889J
12 November 1996

OPNAV INSTRUCTION 6410.1

From: Chief of Naval Operations

Subj: UTILIZATION OF NAVAL FLIGHT SURGEONS

Ref: (a) United States Naval Flight Surgeon's Manual, 3rd
Edition (1991)
(b) United States Naval Flight Surgeon Aircraft Mishap
Investigation Pocket Reference, 3rd Edition (1990)

1. Purpose. To provide policy and criteria governing the utilization of Naval Flight Surgeons and to promote standardization of the Department of the Navy implementation of these policies and criteria in order to furnish the highest possible level of military readiness, safety, and clinical care.

2. General. The need for specialized medical support to endorse a viable aviation safety program has been acknowledged by both Naval Medicine and the aviation community. Recognizing this need for specialized medical support, the Flight Surgeon's role was established to ensure the highest possible level of health and safety for aviation squadrons. Flight Surgeons practice preventive medicine and apply aeromedical knowledge and practical aviation experience to mishap investigations, aviator evaluation boards, flight surgeon boards, and aeromedical teaching. Through optimum utilization of the Flight Surgeon, the highest level of success can be achieved in the aviation safety program.

3. Policy. Flight Surgeons can most effectively fulfill their responsibility of preventing accidents and improving military readiness through frequent, close personal observation of the unit personnel in the unit work environment. To this end, the Navy policies with respect to utilization of Naval Flight Surgeons are as follows:

a. Primary administrative control remains with the command to which the Flight Surgeon is assigned, with duties assigned by the commanding officer.



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b. Flight Surgeons shall spend 50 percent of their regular duty time directly engaged in aeromedical activities in the unit work area, i.e., squadron spaces. References (a) and (b) establish specific duties and responsibilities for Flight Surgeons.

c. Delineation of exact time allocation, duties, chain of command, etc., should be established by written memoranda (Memoranda of Understanding) between the officer in charge or commanding officer of the Medical Treatment Facility (MTF) and the commanding officer of the squadron to which the Flight Surgeon is assigned.

d. While employed in the MTF, the Flight Surgeon should be assigned to the Aviation Medicine Department and be primarily responsible for aviation sick call and aviation physicals. The Flight Surgeon should have the opportunity to treat personnel of the parent command whenever possible.

4. Action. Implementation of the requirements of this instruction demands discriminating judgment on the part of all officers of the Navy and Marine Corps associated with Naval Flight Surgeons. All Naval Aviation personnel and MTF shall familiarize themselves with this instruction. Full compliance with both the letter and spirit of the guidelines delineated herein is imperative.



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